

We are writing regarding the matter of Touch America referenced in WC Docket No. 03-259 and Comp. Pol. File No. 667

My name is Gerry Henson and I am Director of Information Systems for a company called Puget Sound Truck Lines. We provide transportation services to customers in the Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana area. Many of our customers are lumber mills and paper mills in the remote areas of these states.

We rely heavily on the circuits installed and maintained by Touch America to maintain contact between our Dispatch Center and our customers. Any disruption of those services would be devastating to us and to our customers.

Since being notified of the discontinuance of the Touch America circuits we have been scrambling to secure a suitable carrier and circuits to replace those Touch America circuits. The process of selecting a carrier has been tedious and time consuming at best due to the remote areas that most of these circuits were serving.

We finally selected a carrier, Qwest, who has been able to provide us with service to all areas requested and have implemented the cut-over process.

Unfortunately this cut-over of circuits will not take place by the January 31, 2004 termination date mandated by the FCC of Touch America's existing accounts.

While we're a relatively small company (about \$75 million revenue per year), well over half of our revenues come from areas that would be affected by shutting down the Touch America accounts. This would have a devastating affect on not only our company but it would also affect our customers in those remote, rural areas. In some cases the affect might be that those customers businesses might be impacted to the point that they would suffer temporary shutdowns of their businesses as well.

We are pleading with the FCC to delay shut down of the Touch America circuits until our new vendor, Qwest, can complete the cut-over of our existing circuits. We anticipate that the cut-over of service could be completed by March 15, 2004.

Thank you for your consideration and we hope that you will be able to extend the deadline for the shutdown of the Touch America circuits.

If you have any questions of me at all, please feel free to contact me at 206 654 7309.